

I thought last issue would be the end of all the table setting we need to finally get to this arc's big blowout. Apparently, the blowout's going to be even bigger than I thought, as the set-up isn't quite done yet. Disappointing as it is to be put off from the major action fest you're hungering for, this is probably a good thing. It's a bit too simple to pit Krang and Shredder against each other and expect our heroes to just do their own thing scot-free. Turns out the plan and the subsequent obstacles are going to be a bit more complicated than that. The general plan remains the same, but a few details dial the risk levels significantly higher than before. With Donnie trapped in a room full of Foot plus Rocksteady and Bebop, that leaves only his three brothers to use the Krang-Shredder diversion to invade the Technodrome and shut it down. That also leaves Hob with only his ragtag crew and Splinter to take on the rest of the Foot. Splitting our already small company means less confidence that everyone can make it out unscathed. This is even more the case when you consider that the fragile plan is already going awry. After Stockman fulfills his role as TMNT's biggest douche and betrays Honeycutt, only to land both of them in hot water, that leaves Leo, Donnie, and Raph without their expected inside ally when they arrive at the Technodrome. You'll also notice that Karai is nowhere by Shredder's side during the battle on Burnow, which means she'll be waiting for Hob and Co. when they arrive. Nobody is ignorant of the danger they're taking on. In fact the issue is heavy with a dread you've never felt from the series before, which makes you wonder if someone really won't survive the arc. Everybody's skittish and nervous to begin with, but after the Turtle family has not one, but two heartfelt exchanges as to what they're about to do, you get the sense they're all offering their last words. The question is whether the series is ready to take that next, very serious step. Still, I feel mostly optimistic that things can work out somehow. Donnie may be outnumbered, but he's also got some good firepower in Metalhead, which no one in the Foot knows about yet, and he's definitely got more brains than Rocksteady and Bebop combined. There's also April cornering Professor Miller into helping her, albeit with no specific task in mind. And we can't discount the at-large status of Casey, Angel, and Apolex. So our heroes still have resources to work with; we'll see if things play out as pat as all that. From a narrative point of view, it's a bit disorienting for us to start this issue with everyone on the same page when they were anything but last issue. Eastman-Curnow-Waltz do provide a flashback at the end of the issue to explain all, which is a relatively sophisticated bit of storytelling from this mostly straightforward series. It works, but you feel as though the somber issue would have better served by ending on the Turtle family's goodbyes and parting. Smith's lines aren't quite as tight as they could be and he doesn't give nearly as much individuality to the Turtles as Mateus Santolouco is able to do, but overall, he provides a fine level of detail on a cartoonish subject. He also gets a lot of wonderful expression out of the Turtles, which is necessary for an issue as tense as this one. The concern and wariness in everyone's faces reminds us this is no ordinary battle they're all plunging into, and by the issue's end you're genuinely feeling the danger hanging over them. Some Musings:- "Donatello, tell that juvenile delinquent in orange to stop touching my gear!" Harold may be an old curmudgeon, but I wish he was my grandpa anyway.- Love the huffy posture Metalhead (as remotely operated by Harold) takes when Mikey starts fiddling around with the tech in the lab. The post Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #42 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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